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THE JESUS-MESSIAH CONTROVERSY IN MODERN CRITICISM

Submitted by

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THE JESUS-MESSIAH CONTROVERSY IN MODERN CRITICISM

I. The Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to survey the field of modern scholarship, which extends from 1901 to the present, with reference to two questions, namely, Did the historic Jesus believe himself to be the Messiah? If so, in what sense did he accept the Messianic role for himself? These questions have engaged the attention of our age more powerfully, perhaps, than that of any earlier generation.

The only available source material, with which it is possible to answer these questions, is to be found in the Synoptic Gospels. The uncritical, but Christian, believer, after reading the Gospel narratives, comes away from the sources with the assurance that Jesus did think himself to be the Messiah. It becomes, on the contrary, a problem to the critical reader.

The critical scholars have studied the Gospel narratives, but, for the most part, they have gone away from the sources with various conclusions. Some of the scholars think that Jesus did not believe himself to be the Messiah, while others are certain that he did.

Among those who think that he did believe himself to be the Messiah, there is a wide difference of opinion.

This is an important problem. Montefiore says: "Here we touch upon the biggest problem in the Gospel story." (1) It deals with what the psychologists would call "the self-consciousness of Jesus." Jesus has been saying to us, as he said to the disciples nineteen hundred years ago, "But who say ye that I am?" This we cannot adequately answer until we know what he believed about himself. When we are able to answer the question, "What did Jesus think himself to be?" the field of modern religious thought will be greatly clarified. The first step to be taken in answering his question is a study of the interpretation placed upon him by modern scholars.

Very little work has been done on this problem by other investigators. There is no book that covers the entire field which the writer treats in this thesis. William Sanday published a book in 1908, entitled, The Life of Christ in Modern Research, which gives a treatment of the controversy between Schweitzer and Wrede. Albert Schweitzer, in his book, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, makes a critical study of various lives of Jesus from Reimarus (1694-1768) to, and including,

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1. The Synoptic Gospels, Vol. I, p. cxxii.

Schweitzer and Wrede. This is an eminently ingenious history of the German research on the life of Jesus.

Fortunately the material available for this study is large, consisting for the most part of "lives of Jesus." All of them treat the problem. The books about Jesus cannot evade the issue. It is to be noted that the self-consciousness of Jesus has been little emphasized in independent systematic treatments. In 1916, Anson Philips Strokes brought out a book on this subject, entitled, What Jesus Christ Thought of Himself.

It has been stated that the purpose of the writer is to discover the trend of modern scholarship, which extends from 1901 to 1930, with reference to two questions, namely, Did the historic Jesus believe himself to be the Messiah? If so, in what sense did he accept the messianic role for himself? This can best be accomplished by a chronological survey of the material. It is necessary to approach this study with an open mind, in order to give an impartial and honest presentation of the position of each scholar treated in the thesis. The task of discovering the trend of modern scholarship is to review, chronologically, the positions of the scholars, and not to determine whether their conclusions are correct or false.

II. The Beginning of the Controversy

The awakened interest in the problem of the self-consciousness of Jesus, announced and prepared in the closing years of the nineteenth century, made itself felt in the beginning of the twentieth. On the threshold of this new century (1901), there appeared the books of three eminent scholars, namely, Oscar Holtzmann, William Wrede and Albert Schweitzer. The advent of these books mark the beginning of "The Jesus-Messiah Controversy in Modern Criticism."

1. Oscar Holtzmann

Das Leben Jesu (1901, Eng. Edition, 1904) of Oscar Holtzmann represents the average net result of the research in the life of Jesus at the beginning of the twentieth century. (1) It is substantially the liberal point of view. In 1902, he published a lecture, entitled, Das Messianitatsbewusstsein Jesu und seine neueste Bestreitung (The Messianic Consciousness of Jesus and a recent denial of it), which was an attack against Wrede.

Oscar Holtzmann is certain that Jesus believed himself to be the Messiah. (2) He states that the Baptism

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1. Sanday, The Life of Christ in Recent Research, p. 91.
2. The Life of Jesus, p. 138.

in the Jordan "is, after all, the awakening of Jesus's belief in himself as the Messiah." (1) The descent of the Holy Spirit endows him for the first time with the attributes which distinguish him as the Messiah from all other men: "he becomes the first-born Son of the Spirit of God." (2)

This belief, that he is the Messiah, is to Jesus "a holy secret." (3) He kept it locked up within his own bosom (4), "for nobody except Jesus himself knew that he was the Messiah down to Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi." (5) It is at that time that "Jesus tells his disciples, in the most unmistakable terms, that he is the Messiah." (6) It is not until his entry into Jerusalem, that Jesus himself publicly proclaimed himself to be the Messiah. (7)

In what sense, according to Holtzmann, did Jesus regard himself as the Messiah? He states that when Jesus came from the wilderness, he had laid down the lines which he was determined to follow as Messiah. There was, however, a gradual development of the thought of the Passion in the consciousness of Jesus. "Jesus, however, had learned from actual experience, that the Messiah was rejected by his people, by his family, and even in the places in which he

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1. Holtzmann, The Life of Jesus, p. 137; compare p. 135.
2. Ibid., p. 135.
3. Ibid., p. 168.
4. Ibid., p. 325.
5. Ibid., p. 136.
6. Ibid., p. 325.
7. Ibid., p. 342, 399.

had long laboured to the blessing of many, and that he has to endure all the miseries and privations of the life of a fugitive. Hence, it might seem to be quite in accordance with such dispensation of God that the Messiah should also die. Even now it was evident enough, that it was only through the grievous suffering that the Messiah could attain to his glory; it might therefore be God's will that this suffering should further culminate in an ignominious death, to the end that against this dark background the brightness of future glory might be reflected all the more vividly." (1)

Holtzmann holds that Jesus used the term "Son of Man." (2) Jesus believed that he himself would actually appear as judge at the final judgment, "and after that judgment he will be God's vicegerent on earth, the king in the eternal kingdom which belongs to the saints of the Most High." (3) It was a settled conviction with Jesus, from the first to the last, that his generation would witness this overthrow of all things. (4) The author is certain that Jesus was "apocalyptic." Jesus's answer before the High Priest was apocalyptic. (5) "We shall be quite safe in assuming that his ideas regarding the last things did not travel very far beyond the range of contemporary

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1. Holtzmann, The Life of Jesus, p. 334.
2. Ibid., p. 166.
3. Ibid., p. 138; compare p. 334, 456.
4. Ibid., p. 456.
5. Ibid., p. 476.

'apocalyptic'". (1)

2. William Wrede and Albert Schweitzer

In the same year, in which Oscar Holtzmann's book, Das Leben Jesu, was published, there appeared two other books of importance. The first of these was William Wrede's Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien. Zugleich ein Beitrag zum Verstandnis des Markusevangeliums (The Messianic Secret in the Gospels. Forming a contribution also to the Understanding of the Gospel of Mark.) The second was Albert Schweitzer's Das Messianitats- und Leidensgeheimnis. Eine Skizze des Lebens Jesu (The Secret of the Messiahship and the Passion. A Sketch of the Life of Jesus.) These two books made a sharp attack against the liberal position of Oscar Holtzmann from two sides.

The publication of these two books was an unusual coincidence. "They appeared upon the self-same day, their titles are almost identical, and their agreement in the criticism of the modern historical conception of the life of Jesus extends sometimes to the very phraseology. And yet they are written from quite different standpoints, one from the point of view of literary criticism, the

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1. Holtzmann, loc. cit., p. 455-456.

other from that of the historical recognition of eschatology." (1) Schweitzer contrasts his own theory with that of Wrede as a thorough-going eschatology as against a thorough-going skepticism. (2)

William Wrede, renewing the attempts of Bauer and Golkmar, eliminated altogether the Messianic element from the life of the historical Jesus. (3) His position startled Christian thought, for it completely discredited the older liberal and conservative theories, which held to the Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus.

Wrede, representing thorough-going skepticism, denied the Messianic consciousness of Jesus. He maintained that Jesus never regarded himself as the Messiah, but rather as a "Rab," or in other words, a teacher (and prophet). "In any case, Jesus cannot, according to Wrede, have spoken of his Messianic Coming in the way in which the Synoptists report. The Messiahship of Jesus, as we find it in the Gospels, is a product of early Christian theology correcting history according to its own conceptions." (4)

It was really the "resurrection" which gave rise to the belief that Jesus was the Messiah. Wrede says in his book, entitled, Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelein,

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1. Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, p. 328.
2. Ibid., p. 328.
3. Ibid., p. 11.
4. Ibid., p. 336.

"It is only with the resurrection that Jesus becomes the Messiah." (1) The earliest conception of it was found in the Christian community, and "only by degrees did it come to be supposed that Jesus had claimed to be the Messiah during His earthly ministry." (2)

Who was responsible for introducing this singular feature into the life of Jesus, who was in reality a teacher? After Wrede had made a detailed examination of all the Messianic utterances of Jesus in Mark's Gospel, he came to the conclusion that these utterances could not be accurate historical tradition, but must be theological interpretations. (3) He "argues that Mark, like the other Gospels, is not a historical document wherein the recorded events follow in chronological and logical order, but a collection of episodes with a late Messianic coloring." (4) He concluded that all of the material in Mark referring to the Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus is entirely unhistorical and that it has been moulded by later tradition. Jesus, according to this critic, never thought himself to be the Messiah.

Albert Schweitzer's Das Messianitats- und Leidensgeheimnis. Eine Skizze des Lebens Jesu opposed

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1. p. 213; quoted from Bundy, The Psychic Health of Jesus, p. 214.
2. Sanday, The Life of Christ in Recent Research, p. 73.
3. Bultmann, "The New Approach to the Synoptic Problem," The Journal of Religion, VI, July 1926, p. 340.
4. Klausner, Jesus of Nazareth, p. 91.

the liberal Jesus-picture from the opposite side by renewing the comprehensive claim of Reimarus and Johannes Weiss on behalf of eschatology. (1)

The term, "eschatology" refers to the events which were expected to happen at the end of the world-age. There was to be a great crash and collapse of all human kingdoms, when God would usher in the divine kingdom. Schweitzer applies this belief to the study of the Gospels in a more thorough-going fashion than ever before.

According to Schweitzer, Jesus lived completely in the eschatological Messianic ideas, based upon the near approach of the supernatural kingdom of heaven. Jesus knew himself as the "eschatological Messiah." "That Jesus of Nazareth knew Himself to be the Son of Man who was to be revealed," he says, "is for us the great fact of His self-consciousness, which is not to be further explained, whether there had been any kind of preparation for it in contemporary theology or not." (2)

Jesus believed that the Parousia of the Son of Man was at hand. When Jesus sent the disciples on their mission, he did not expect them to return before the Parousia. (3) He held that the end of the world was immediately at hand, in which the supernatural eschato-

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1. Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, p. 11.
2. Ibid., p. 365.
3. Ibid., p. 364.

logical course of history would break through and into the natural course. (1) Although possessing the full consciousness of his Messianic position, he conceals it. It was the belief of Jesus that "a kind of supernatural illumination" would suddenly make known all that he was keeping a secret. (2) Jesus himself did not reveal his consciousness to his disciples. Even at the Transfiguration, the three do not learn it from him, "but in a state of ecstasy, an ecstasy which He shared with them." At Caesarea Philippi, it is Peter, who reveals His Messiahship. "We may say, therefore, that Jesus did not voluntarily give up his Messianic secret; it was wrung from Him by the pressure of events." (3)

The knowledge of his Messianic consciousness remained a secret even in those days at Jerusalem. (4) The entry into Jerusalem was Messianic for Jesus, but not for the people. (5) Even at the trial of Jesus, the public knew nothing of the Messiahship of Jesus. (6) The high priest showed himself in possession of it. Schweitzer holds that it was Judas who betrayed to Jesus's enemies the secret of his Messiahship known to him since Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi. (7)

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1. Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus, p. 365.
2. Ibid., p. 360.
3. Ibid., p. 384.
4. Ibid., p. 394.
5. Ibid., p. 392.
6. Ibid., p. 394.
7. Ibid., p. 370.

In all of Jesus's speeches and actions "the Messianic Consciousness shines forth." (1) Before the high priest, "Jesus immediately admitted it, and strengthened the admission by an allusion to His Parousia in the near future as the Son of Man." (2)

The sufferings of Jesus are given an important place in this eschatological theory. After Jesus had been revealed as the Messiah, he spoke of the secret of his sufferings, death, and resurrection. The "resurrection" becomes synonymous with "His Parousia." (3) "What is certain," Schweitzer states, "is that, for Him, suffering was always associated with the Messianic secret, since He placed His Parousia at the end of the pre-Messianic tribulations in which He was to have His part." (4) Later, a new conviction dawned upon him, namely, that "He must suffer for others.....that the Kingdom might come." (5)

The skepticism of Wrede and the eschatological zeal of Schweitzer have had a great influence in the field of modern scholarship. They have not died out. The controversy in modern criticism is still alive.

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1. Schweitzer, loc. cit., p. 370.
2. Ibid., p. 395.
3. Ibid., p. 391.
4. Ibid., p. 386.
5. Ibid., p. 387.

III. The Field of Modern Criticism

It has been stated in the Introduction, that it is the purpose of the writer to discover the trend of the Jesus-Messiah controversy in the field of modern criticism, which extends from 1901 to the present. A chronological survey is to be made of modern scholarship. It is our task to review the positions of the scholars as their books appeared.

1. Paul Wernle

Paul Wernle makes a vigorous defence of Jesus's Messianic consciousness in his book, The Beginnings of Christianity, (English translation, 1903.) The prophet always points to one higher than himself, and therefore assigns a provisional character to himself, "while Jesus knew Himself to be God's final messenger, after whom none higher can come. That is the decisive consideration. The superhuman self-consciousness of Jesus, which knows nothing higher than itself save God and can expect none other, could find satisfactory expression in no other form but that of the Messianic idea." (1) He holds that Jesus became aware of it at the Baptism. (2) He makes this interesting statement:

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1. Wernle, The Beginnings of Christianity, Vol. I, p. 45.
2. Ibid., Vol. I., p. 46.

"Jesus learns new things as to the manner of His calling, but never anything fresh as to the fact itself." (1)

Wernle maintains that Jesus accepted the Messianic idea under compulsion. "He knows Himself sent, nay, driven by God." (2) It is clear that the Messianic idea is inadequate for Jesus. There is that "want of inner harmony between Jesus and the Messianic idea." (3) His rejection or correction of the Jewish ideas is to be noted. "He laboured with it, broke it up, re-cast it; yet a portion of the deception which it contained was transmitted to Him." (4)

In what sense, did Jesus accept the Messianic role for himself? Israel had rejected him. Jesus, thus, banished the national Messianic idea from his mind. The bitter experience that Jesus has gained in His dealings with His people causes the thought of the necessity of suffering, and even death, to ripen in His soul." (5) Jesus begins to familiarize the minds of the disciples with it from the day at Caesarea Philippi. Jesus was the first to apply Isaiah liii. to the dying Messiah. "Thus did Jesus after much labour purify the title of Messiah which He had at first assumed through an inner compulsion." (6)

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1. Wernle, The Beginnings of Christianity, Vol. I, p. 45.
2. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 46.
3. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 47; cf., p. 52.
4. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 52.
5. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 49.
6. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 49.

Jesus taught that the kingdom of God, with which the Messiah is linked, has an eschatological connotation. (1) "He left His disciples the hope in the restitution of all things as a legacy in connection, it would seem, with Daniel's vision of the Son of Man who was to descend upon the clouds of heaven. Jesus died with this belief in His speedy return in Messianic glory." Jesus was mistaken in the point of time, for "He thought of the return as to His own generation amongst whom He had worked, by whom He had been rejected." (2)

2. Johannes Weiss

Johannes Weiss published Das älteste Evangelium in the year 1903; a book written in explicit critique of Wrede. He made a minute examination of all the details in the Gospel of Mark. As a result of his studies, he was very positive that a historical basis could be found behind the narrative in almost every section in Mark. He was convinced that the testimony to Jesus's Messianic Consciousness belongs to the earliest and most authentic tradition. (3)

Weiss states in his work, Paul and Jesus, (1909) that "Jesus was conscious of His mission as the Messiah, and ..... that He was firmly convinced of His resur-

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1. Wernle, loc. cit., p. 63, Vol. 1.
2. Ibid., Vol. I, p. 50.
3. Easton, The Gospel Before the Gospel, p. 9-11.

rection and elevation to Messianic supremacy." (1) Weiss's position, which is to be found in his book, entitled, Die Predigt Jesu vom Reiche Gottes (1892, with a new and enlarged edition in 1900), has been summarized by Schweitzer. (2) He held that Jesus exercised no "Messianic functions," but waited for the coming of the Kingdom by supernatural means. Although he had believed the Kingdom at hand, he became convinced that it could not take place so long as the people did not repent. He realized that he must play the role of Messiah and that his life must stand in place of repentance. It becomes clear to him that his own death must be the ransom-price. Jesus died voluntarily on behalf of the people, in the expectation that he should return to life and come with the "clouds of heaven" as the "Son of Man" within the lifetime of the generation to whom he had proclaimed the nearness of the Kingdom of God. In conclusion, it may be stated that the Messianic self-consciousness of Jesus was apocalyptic.

3. Julius Wellhausen

Julius Wellhausen was engaged in the criticism of the Synoptic Gospels during the years 1903 to 1905. He wrote

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1. Easton, loc. cit., p. 5.
2. Schweitzer, loc. cit., pp. 238-239.

four important books: Das Evangelium Marci, ubersetzt und erklart (1903), Das Evangelium Matthaei usw. (1904), Das Evangelium Lucae usw., (1904), and Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelium (1905). The result of his labours are summed up in the last one.

Wellhausen followed in the path of Wrede with his famous skeptical statement that "we cannot get back to him, even if we would." (1) He is sure that the sources are too strongly christianized to enable any one to get back to the historical Jesus. (2) He holds that the development in the life of Jesus is to be found only by a false interpretation of Mark's Gospel. (3)

Jesus never spoke to his disciples of his passion, resurrection, or parousia, (4) Jesus went up to Jerusalem, but not in order to be crucified. The idea of the suffering Messiah and the entire conception of the Messiah, as understood by the Christians grew up with the belief in the resurrection of Jesus. Wellhausen allows it as possible that Jesus confessed his Messiahship before the high priest, but we are assured that it played little or nothing in what he considered his mission and message. (5) "But really he did not wish to be more than a sower

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1. Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelium, p. 104; quoted from Bundy, Our Recovery of Jesus, p. 101.
2. Bundy, The Psychic Health of Jesus, p. 214.
3. Loofs, What is the Truth about Jesus Christ, p. 76.
4. Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelium, p. 96; quoted from Bundy, The Psychic Health of Jesus, p. 214.
5. Bundy, The Psychic Health of Jesus, p. 214.

who scattered the seed of the word of God and strove to prepare a religious regeneration of his nation." (1)

4. Nathaniel Schmidt

In Nathaniel Schmidt's book, The Prophet of Nazareth (1905), the author maintains that Jesus thought of himself as a prophet. Jesus identified himself with the prophetic movement at his baptism. (2) He began to preach, not that the Messiah had come, or that he was the Messiah, but that the kingdom of heaven was at hand. (3) Schmidt says that there is "no ground for assuming that he regarded himself as the Messiah, and no justification for such a construction of the vacillating and mutually exclusive tradition." (4)

Jesus rejected all claim of the Messiahship at Caesarea Philippi. Jesus charged the disciples not to say that he was the Messiah. He did not want men to believe in him as the Messiah and to confess him as such. "That," says Schmidt, "is perfectly clear from what has been permitted to remain in the account." (5)

Jesus did speak to his disciples about the danger involved in the mission on which he was setting

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1. Loofs, What is the Truth about Jesus Christ, p. 76.
2. The Prophet of Nazareth, p. 261.
3. Ibid., p. 263.
4. Ibid., p. 261.
5. Ibid., p. 277.

out and the probability that he would meet with the same fate as many a prophet before him. (1)

He maintains that this change from his prophetic ministry to the acceptance of the Messianic claims is "inconceivable." He adds this statement, "The death on Calvary was not so tragic as such a surrender of his ideal would have been." (2)

He is convinced that the disciples, becoming aware of his resurrection, looked upon Jesus as the Messiah, the "Son of Man." (3)

5. David Smith

David Smith maintains the position, in both of his books, The Days of His Flesh (1905) and Our Lord's Earthly Life (1926), that Jesus did believe himself to be the Messiah.

Jesus discovered the fact that he was the promised Messiah during the passover week at the age of twelve. (4) The Baptism "was a distinct attestation of his Messiahship, since the Son of God was a Jewish title for the Messiah." (5)

When he was called "the Son of David" and "the

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1. The Prophet of Nazareth, p. 277.
2. Schmidt, The Prophet of Nazareth, p. 281.
3. Ibid., p. 318-322.
4. The Days of His Flesh, p. 23; cf. Our Lord's Earthly Life, p. 27.
5. Ibid., p. 33; cf. Our Lord's Earthly Life, p. 35.

Son of God", he accepted the ascription since he was indeed the King of Israel, though in a deeper sense than they had conceived; but he never so styled himself. His chosen designation was "the Son of Man," one of the common folk, "the people of the earth." This title made it possible for him to proclaim his fellowship with the humble and the despised. "The title 'Son of Man' served as a continual protest against that secular ideal of the Messiahship which more than anything else hindered His recognition and acceptance; and in assuming it Jesus designed to make men think and perchance discover that the true Messianic glory was not what they conceived -- not the glory of earthly majesty, but the glory of sacrifice." (1).

It was Peter, who by divine revelation, made the great confession. Jesus hailed the confession with exultant rapture. It furnished him with the assurance that the twelve had perceived beneath his lowliness the glory of his heavenly grace. "At the same time He recognized the peril which their faith involved and the mischief which would ensue if they proclaimed it, since it would encourage the popular expectation of a national bouleversement. And therefore He immediately charged them to 'tell no one that He was the Christ.'" (2).

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1. The Days of His Flesh, p. 50; Cf. Our Lord's Earthly Life, p. 43.
2. The Days of His Flesh, p. 267; cf. Our Lord's Earthly Life, p. 211.

Jesus realized that his Messiahship would lead him over the path of rejection, suffering and death. He was certain that he, the Messiah, must die. "All the days of His ministry," says Smith, "the cross had been before Him." Jesus does not stop with his death, he gives the disciples the assurance of his resurrection "on the third day." (1) He thought of his Messiahship in the apocalyptic sense, for he does speak of "His Second Advent." (2)

6. W. Bousset

W. Bousset, the author of Jesus (1906), maintains it to be self-evident in the Gospels that "Jesus considered himself to be the Messiah of his people." (3) He points out that even though the Gospels are gilded and coloured by the faith of his followers, it would have been wholly incomprehensible that the belief should have been originated in their hearts after his death without any psychological preparation. (4) "We have certain knowledge," says Bousset, "that the belief existed from the very beginning among the Christian Community that Jesus was Messiah, and, arguing backwards, we can assert that the rise of such a belief would be absolutely

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1. The Days of His Flesh, p. 267-269, 377; cf. Our Lord's Earthly Life, p. 213, 214.
2. The Days of His Flesh, p. 424, 471.
3. Jesus, p. 167.
4. Ibid., p. 168.

inexplicable if Jesus had not declared to his disciples in his life time that he was Messiah. It is quite conceivable that the first disciples of Jesus, who by his death and burial had seen all their hopes shattered and their belief in his Messiahship destroyed, might have returned to that belief under the influences of their resurrection experiences, if they had formerly possessed it on the ground of the utterances and general conduct of Jesus." (1) He holds that Jesus did believe himself to be the Messiah in some form or other.

The Messianic consciousness was awakened in the mind of Jesus from the moment of his baptism. It is pointed out that such a consciousness could hardly have been nourished and developed when "failure followed hard on failure." (2)

Jesus accepted the Messiahship as a mere matter of duty, as a burden rather than an inspiration. It "was the only possible form in which Jesus could cloth his inner consciousness, and yet an inadequate form; it was a necessity, but also a heavy burden which he bore in silence almost to the end of his life; it was a conviction which he could never enjoy with a whole heart." (3)

What was Jesus's conception, according to Bousset,

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1. Jesus, p. 168.
2. Ibid., p. 173.
3. Ibid., p. 180.

of his Messiahship? He states that the exact image, which Jesus formed in his own mind, will be found by turning to the Messianic titles which he was wont to confer upon himself. He practically deprecated the name "Son of David," which expressed the more earthly side of the Messianic hopes. He did not use, as a title proper, the term "Son of God." (1) Jesus did claim to be the "Son of Man," but with certain reservations, i. e., never asserting a primaeval existence to himself or claiming to be the future Judge of the world. (2) The idea of the "Son of Man" was intimately connected in the mind of Jesus with the dawning conviction of suffering and death. (3) Jesus had a purpose in mind in adopting this title: "By its use he could define his Messianic claims more narrowly and could brush aside the coarser popular and national ideal of the Messiah as the Son of David; he could in fact set up his claim to be Messiah in the supernatural sense of the Son of Man." (4)

7. Heathcote W. Garrod

H. W. Garrod states in his book, entitled, The Religion

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1. Bousset, Jesus, p. 182-183.
2. Ibid., p. 189.
3. Ibid., p. 190.
4. Ibid., p. 187; compare p. 192-193.

of All Good Men, (1906), that Jesus, along with John, believed himself to be the forerunner or herald of the Messiah. Jesus, who looked upon himself as the successor of John (1), expected an immediate end of all things. (2)

Does Jesus, in employing this phrase "Son of Man," apply it to himself? "I am fully convinced," says Garrod, "that he never does so; and that the idea that he did so came into being only after his death." (3) He could not have thought of himself as the Messiah (4) and he does not identify himself with the Son of Man. (5)

8. Paul W. Schmiedel

The position of Paul W. Schmiedel is presented in his book, Jesus in Modern Criticism (1907). He does not only maintain that Jesus did regard himself as the Messiah, but he makes a vigorous defense of Jesus's own prophecy of his Second Coming.

Jesus came to the conviction that he was the Messiah only after a hard struggle. (6) Since Jesus went to the baptism with the feeling of repentance, it is difficult to imagine "the lofty consciousness that he was the Messiah, a consciousness which would lift him above his human

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1. Garrod, The Religion of All Good Men, p. 11.
2. Ibid., p. 18.
3. Ibid., p. 25.
4. Ibid., p. 25.
5. Ibid., p. 31.
6. Schmiedel, Jesus in Modern Criticism, p. 46.

brethren, should have come upon him on this occasion." (1) "I can," says Schmiedel, "therefore only agree to the view that in Jesus the idea that he was the Messiah ripened gradually during his public ministry, of course before he asked the disciples whom they thought him to be....." (2)

It is his conviction that "Jesus's prophecy that he would come back to earth upon the clouds of heaven remains unshaken ....." (3) Jesus's belief in his Second Coming from heaven was the result of his conviction that he was called to be the Messiah, when he became familiar with the thought that he might be destined to suffer death before he had completed his Messianic work. Jesus, thought, according to this critic, that if God did not decree that he should succeed in introducing the kingdom in the present life, He must give him an opportunity of accomplishing it later. (4) This is in keeping with Jesus's belief that the end of the world was approaching. (5)

9. Alfred E. Garvie

Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus was published in 1907

1. Schmiedel, Jesus in Modern Criticism, p. 39.
2. Ibid., p. 42.
3. Ibid., p. 32.
4. Ibid., p. 47.
5. Ibid., p. 53.

by Alfred E. Garvie. He holds that Jesus's own consciousness of his Messiahship was not so original or essential an element as his sense of Sonship. (1) It was this "sense of Sonship" that led him to his Messianic vocation.

Jesus used the title "Son of Man" personally, in order to define his own distinctive Messianic ideal. (2) The vocation, which he was conscious of and accepted at the Baptism, was that of a Saviour from sin by the sacrifice of himself. (3) It was Jesus, who saw that the salvation of man involved the Messiah's sacrifice. (4) Jesus allied himself with "the Servant of Jehovah," who suffers that he may save, because it is an anticipation of the "Son of Man" he willed to be. (5) He doubtless learned the definite form of his work through experience. (6)

Jesus regarded himself as the Servant of Jehovah destined to save men from their sins by the sacrifice of himself. (7) He maintained his reserve about his Messiahship even towards his disciples until the confession of Peter at Caesarea Philippi. (8) It was "a time of testing." (9) Jesus had proved himself so different from the Messiah they desired and expected that he felt that their

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1. Garvie, Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus, p. 301; cf., p. 304, 308.
2. Ibid., p. 304; cf. p. 120.
3. Ibid., p. 121; cf. p. 122, 156, 239, 317.
4. Ibid., p. 303.
5. Ibid., p. 257.
6. Ibid., p. 120.
7. Ibid., p. 132.
8. Ibid., p. 215.
9. Ibid., p. 140.

faith could be maintained and completed only by a slow growth in mind and heart under his instruction and influence. (1)

Jesus recognized the absolute necessity of his death to the fulfilment of his purpose. (2) "Jesus faced His death as, not an evil to be escaped, but a good to be welcomed." (3) "That His death as a sacrifice for man's sins was necessary we have no proof that Jesus ever doubted." (4)

Jesus does not stop with his death, for he gives the foregleams of the glory to be attained through his resurrection. (5) His answer before the High Priest is undoubtedly a reference to the statement of Daniel. (6) He has in mind the thought of the Jewish apocalypse. (7)

10. Adolf Harnack

It is the position of Adolf Harnack, according to his book, The Sayings of Jesus (English Edition, 1908), that the Messianic consciousness was a development on the part of Jesus. (8) Jesus, during the first and longest period of his ministry, "neither regarded Himself as Messiah, nor indeed could so regard himself." He always rejected

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1. Garvie, Studies in the Inner Life of Jesus, p. 245-246.
2. Ibid., p. 333.
3. Ibid., p. 335.
4. Ibid., p. 385.
5. Ibid., p. 336.
6. Ibid., p. 395.
7. Ibid., p. 396.
8. Harnack, The Sayings of Jesus, pp 244-245.

the title of Messiahship, when it was applied to himself. Nevertheless, Jesus was possessed with the conviction that as a messenger of God he was entrusted with a mission of decisive importance. After Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi, Jesus began to call himself the Son of Man with reserve until his entry into Jerusalem. He proclaimed his Parousia at this same period with growing confidence. Thus we see that there was a gradual development in Jesus's thinking about himself.

11. Benjamin Wisner Bacon

Benjamin W. Bacon seeks to combine in his book, The Beginnings of the Gospel Story (1909), the admission that Jesus did claim to be the Messiah with the keen desire that there should be nothing "theocratic," "outward", or "political" about his conception of the Messiahship. (1) He takes the same position in his later book, entitled, The Story of Jesus and the Beginnings of the Church (1927).

"We ourselves," he says, "admit that Messiah, 'the Christ,' is not the title Jesus would voluntarily choose." (2) Jesus's "favorite self-designation" could not be the apocalyptic figure of the Son of Man. He

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1. Bacon, The Beginnings of Gospel Story, p. 107-108.
2. Bacon, The Story of Jesus and the Beginnings of the Church, p. 220.

was not a visionary and fanatic, who believed himself destined to be brought back after death upon the clouds of heaven within the lifetime of his followers. "Such apocalyptic fanaticism," Bacon says, "is the characteristic not of the sane and well-poised mind of the plain mechanic of Nazareth, but of Pharisaism in his own time and of the later generation of his followers." It was the work of the enthusiastic church, who identified Jesus himself with the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven. When Jesus spoke of the Son of Man, he had in mind the conventional figure, not necessarily himself, who was to be the agent of God's vindication in the coming judgment. The coming of the Danielic Son of Man was to take place while the evil generation still lived that killed the messengers of God. (1)

If Jesus did use the title of Messiah, "it was in a purely ethico-religious sense, and only for the preservation of that deepest and most vital element of the Messianic hope -- the Sonship of God. (2)

12. E. F. Scott

According to The Kingdom and the Messiah (1911), it is the position of E. F. Scott that Jesus arrived at the

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1. Bacon, The Beginning of the Gospel Story, p. 108-9.
2. Ibid., p. 109; cf. Bacon, The Story of Jesus and the Beginnings of the Church, p. 221.

conviction of his Messiahship gradually and tentatively. (1) The Messianic consciousness of Jesus was the outcome of the general sense of his relation to the Kingdom. (2) Jesus, sensing his personal relation to the Kingdom, realized that the only category adequate to explain it was that of the Messiah. (3)

Jesus assumed the Messianic title, but "he sought to reinterpret it, and so bring it into harmony with his own idea of his vocation." (4) Jesus changed the various elements of the traditional hope into their "ethical and religious equivalents." (5) The new Messianic conception that grew up in his mind was largely due to the influence of Isaiah's prophecy of the Suffering Servant. (6) Jesus was silent concerning his Messiahship, because it remained a problem to his own mind. (7)

It was only as his own vocation became clearer to him, that he learned to identify this vague "Son of Man" figure of eschatology with himself. (8) The apocalyptic name, Son of Man, "was intended to point forward to what He would yet be, and thus to explain the seeming contradictions of His present lot. But while He used it primarily with reference to His

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1. Scott, The Kingdom and the Messiah, p; 200-201.
2. Ibid., p. 247, 156.
3. Ibid., p. 248.
4. Ibid., p. 184.
5. Ibid., p. 248, 216-219.
6. Ibid., p. 184.
7. Ibid., p. 171.
8. Ibid., p. 201.

future exaltation, He also associated it, in a significant manner, with His suffering and death." (1) Jesus believed, according to this Scholar that his death would be the beginning of the consummation, the way to attain his Messianic dignity, the act by which he was to initiate the series of final events, which would culminate in the fulfilment of the Kingdom. (2) Jesus asserted his own inherent right to be Judge and Saviour by his claim to be the Messiah. (3)

Jesus believed himself to be the Messiah, not only of the future, but of the present. (4) It is this double strain in his Messianic consciousness which finds expression in Jesus's answer before the High Priest. (5)

13. George Tyrrell

George Tyrrell, in his book, entitled, Christianity at the Cross-Roads (1913), appears to be a whole-hearted supporter of the eschatological position. "He accepts," says Cyril W. Emmet, "the view of Weiss and Schweitzer, practically without reserve, as the last word of criticism." (6) He makes a summary of it in chapter viii., "The Christ of Eschatology." (7).

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1. Scott, The Kingdom and the Messiah, p. 249.
2. Ibid., p. 249-173.
3. Ibid., p. 252.
4. Ibid., p. 207.
5. Ibid., p. 208.
6. Emmet, The Eschatological Question in the Gospels, p. 5.
7. Tyrrell, Christianity at the Cross-Roads, p. 46-61.

Jesus believed himself to be the Son of Man. There is no evidence that will stand criticism that there was a development in his self-consciousness. The eschatology of Jesus was the same as the Jewish apocalyptics, with the difference that he identified himself as the one destined to be the Son of Man, "a superhuman heavenly being, the ruler of a supernatural Kingdom of God, that was to descend upon the earth and take the place of the present order of things." He thought of his Messiahship and of the Kingdom as transcendental and supernatural. Jesus was convinced of the nearness of the final catastrophe; "It might burst forth in a year; it could not delay beyond a generation."

Jesus realized that it would necessarily cost him his life. He saw the cross ahead of him. But Jesus believed that by his own death, he would hasten the issue. It should be the method whereby he would enter his glory. Jesus regarded himself, in his earthly state, as the "suffering servant", who was to be eventually glorified as the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven.

14. Anson Phelps Stokes

Anson Phelps Stokes published What Jesus Christ Thought of Himself in the year 1916. He is convinced that the word "Messiah" is the key to the self-consciousness of Jesus. (1) Jesus does claim himself to be the Messiah. (2) He believes that there was doubtless a growth in his self-consciousness as the Messiah. (3) He maintains that Jesus was conscious of his Messiahship "at least after the baptism." (4)

Jesus seized upon and accepted the Jewish ideal, "fulfilling" it -- "that is filling it full of new and broader spiritual significance." (5) He summed up within himself many types and ideals of Jewish history. It was a necessary step for him to take. "He had to take the inherited thought of the Messiahship as he found it, then broaden it, and give it a more profound significance." (6)

The suffering Messiah of Isaiah had impressed itself upon his mind, and he could not escape the conviction that he must suffer for the sins of humanity. (7) He must suffer voluntarily for his people. (8)

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1. Stokes, What Jesus Christ Thought of Himself, p. 103.
2. Ibid., p. 37, 38, 104.
3. Ibid., p. 1.
4. Ibid., p. 39.
5. Ibid., p. 103.
6. Ibid., p. 40.
7. Ibid., p. 93.
8. Ibid., p. 95.

Jesus was conscious of his resurrection. (1) He believed that God would raise him from the dead. It was "his conviction that he would be justified in the eyes of the world as the Messiah through the knowledge that his spirit had overcome death." (2) This would take place in his immediate and sudden Second Coming "on the clouds of heaven" and of the setting up of the eternal Kingdom in which he was to be the great judge. (3)

15. James Alex. Robertson

In The Spiritual Pilgrimage of Jesus (1917), James Alex. Robertson shows how Jesus's Son-consciousness unites with his servant-consciousness and his God-consciousness merges into his vocational-consciousness. This represents the spiritual pilgrimage in his life.

"The greatest spiritual fact that has ever emerged in the long story of the human race," he says, "is Jesus of Nazareth's consciousness of God." (4) Jesus looked upon his God as "Father". This Son-consciousness must be carried far back into the life of the Nazareth boy. (5)

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1. Stokes, What Jesus Christ Thought of Himself, p. 95.
2. Ibid., p. 97.
3. Ibid., p. 98.
4. Robertson, The Spiritual Pilgrimage of Jesus, p. 13.
5. Ibid., p. 25.

It is a mystery how Jesus himself attained to this consciousness and no psychology can fathom it. (1)

He places the awakening of Jesus's vocational-consciousness at the Baptism: "the discovery of His own Divine Vocation -- the waking of His soul to the conviction that He was called to be the chief servant of that Kingdom upon earth -- came suddenly at the end of the hidden years." (2) The baptism was simply an open vow of sacramental self-dedication to service. (3)

That service implied sacrifice. "He came to serve, to be the Suffering Servant, to give His life, -- to serve by sacrifice." (4) He always identified himself with the servant -- the suffering servant. This was brought to a climax on the mount of Transfiguration. "It was here, we believe," says Robertson, "that the full blaze of God's disclosure to the Son -- that He was called to fill the role of the despised sufferer of prophecy -- flooded the rapt eyes of His spirit." (5)

When Jesus speaks of his death, he speaks with an equal assurance of victory. (6) Jesus is certain that the Kingdom must triumph since it is God's will. Jesus, with equal certainty, believes that he too must triumph since death could not defeat the Father's will which he

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1. Robertson, The Spiritual Pilgrimage of Jesus, p. 50.
2. Ibid., p. 140.
3. Ibid., p. 154.
4. Ibid., p. 184.
5. Ibid., p. 264-265.
6. Ibid., p. 279.

was following in uttermost obedience. "Sometimes this vision of victory clothed itself in apocalyptic imagery. The Son of Man would come again upon the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.....The Divine victory would not be complete unless He through whose obedience it was to be achieved was present in the triumph." (1)

16. Rollin Lynde Hartt

Rollin Lynde Hartt, in his book, entitled, The Man Himself (1923), states that Jesus, the man from Nazareth allowed his followers to call him rabbi, though, when speaking of himself, he claimed the loftier rank of a prophet. (2)

Hartt maintains that this young rabbi claimed that after his death he should become the Son of Man, coming in the clouds with power and great glory before the generation then living had passed away. (3) This was an astounding claim to be made; "it embodied a conception that explains why he died without ever having attempted to found a new religion, why he declined to deal with social questions, even the most urgent, and why he never committed his philosophy to writing." (4)

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1. Robertson, The Spiritual Pilgrimage of Jesus, p. 280.
2. Hartt, The Man Himself, p. 15.
3. Ibid., p. 1-2, 226.
4. Ibid., p. 3-4.

17. Georges Berguer

Georges Berguer states in his book, Some Aspects of the Life of Jesus (1923), that Jesus did think himself to be the Messiah. Like Bousset, he believes that the idea of the Messiah was for Jesus the only possible form of his consciousness, and yet an incomplete form which he bore in silence almost to the end of his life. (1)

When Jesus was baptized, something happened to him. He felt himself in perfect communion with the Father. It was a consecration to a new task, the beginning of a vocation. (2) He consecrated his life to a mission, "the form of which is still unknown to him." (3) He feels himself the object of the Father's whole affection. (4).

While in the desert alone and in silence, Jesus discovered that his vocation lay along the extended lines of "Messianism." He realized that he was to be the Messiah, or something approximating to that: he was to come in the name of his Father. (5)

His task becomes clear to him. He is going to give men everything he has within himself, and nothing

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1. Berguer, Some Aspects of the Life of Jesus, p. 241-2.
2. Ibid., p. 156.
3. Ibid., p. 159.
4. Ibid., p. 160.
5. Ibid., p. 164.

else. "He is going to be a Messiah, in the sense of moral truth and the spirit, that is in the divine-human sense." (1) The expression, Son of Man, was immediately chosen by Jesus as one of his own titles, for it did define what he wished to bring to men. It expressed, while designating the Messianic dignity, something else as well. The Son of Man was Man, man preeminently. (2) This title Jesus could claim, for he was, more than any one else, the Son of Man, Man par excellence, because he felt his divine sonship more strongly than any other man. (3)

18. Joseph Klausner

It is the position of Klausner, according to his book, Jesus of Nazareth (1925), that while he was being baptized in the Jordan, "suddenly there flashed through Jesus's mind, like lightning, the idea that he was the hoped-for Messiah." (4) This idea seemed so impossible and so ridiculous for a carpenter of Nazareth, that "he kept it to himself" until comparatively much later. (5)

He maintains that at the Caesarea Philippi episode, Jesus began to teach his disciples that he had accepted

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1. Berguer, Some Aspects of the Life of Jesus, pl 178-9.
2. Ibid., p. 242.
3. Ibid., p. 193.
4. Klausner, Jesus of Nazareth, p. 252.
5. Ibid., p. 253-4.

the role of a "suffering Messiah." (1) This did not imply that the Messiah should be put to death. That idea would have been impossible of comprehension both to the Jews and to Jesus himself. (2) Jesus told his disciples that at Jerusalem, he should suffer greatly, but would, in the end, be victorious and be recognized by the crowds at the Passover as the Messiah. (3) Jesus promised his disciples the greatest honour in the new world of the apocalyptic literature. "The ideal of Jesus is not, therefore solely spiritual: it is a truly Jewish messianic ideal, material and worldly." (4)

Jesus had come to Jerusalem as the "King-Messiah." He entered the city in accord with his ideals. (5) He went to Jerusalem to announce "that he was the Messiah." He believed that in Jerusalem on this Passover day, "God would bring to pass signs and wonders: Rome would be overthrown 'and that without hands,' by help from on high; and (he himself) should be the 'Son of Man,' 'the Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven,' who was to sit on the right hand of God, and, with his twelve disciples, judge the twelve tribes of Israel." (6) The coming Kingdom was apocalyptic in nature and was

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1. Klausner, Jesus of Nazareth, p. 300.
2. Ibid., p. 301.
3. Ibid., p. 302.
4. Ibid., p. 305.
5. Ibid., p. 309.
6. Ibid., p. 313.

to come upon his own generation. (1)

19. J. Middleton Murry

In the book, Jesus: Man of Genius (1926), J. Middleton Murry maintains that Jesus never came to think that he was the Messiah, but only that he was to become the Messiah. (2) He did think of himself as the Son of God in precisely the same sense as he thought all men to be sons of God. (3)

Jesus knew himself as the Messiah-to-be. He began to tell his disciples, as they were walking along the road from Bethsaida and Caesarea, that "he would suffer many things; he would be killed; but he would rise again and come in his new glory as the true Messiah, bring with the end of the world and opening of the Kingdom of God." (4) He would become the "Son of Man in the sense of the book of Daniel, the anointed Messiah, the Christ, God's great Deputy and Judge." (5)

20. Edward Increase Bosworth

Bosworth makes a vigorous defence of the thesis that Jesus's

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1. Klausner, Jesus of Nazareth, p. 323.
2. Murry, Jesus: Man of Genius, p. 20
3. Ibid., p. 37.
4. Ibid., p. 176.
5. Ibid., p. 307.

Messianic consciousness was a gradual development in his book, The Life and Teachings of Jesus. (1926.)

Jesus discovered at his baptism that he was not simply a son of the Heavenly Father, but that he was "The Son of God, The Beloved" charged with the responsibility of leadership in the New Age. He must learn the form of this leadership as time goes on. (1) Of course, the Gospel writers, in the light of what had happened, interpreted every saying possible in a Messianic sense. (2)

When Jesus reached the Caesarea vicinity, he appeared with the conviction that he himself was the Messiah. He had reached the conviction that "he must himself step forward to be in the New Age more than the loving son of God that he had learned to be in the Nazareth years, and more than that into which the Nazareth consciousness enlarged at baptism, the especially loved Son of God, 'The Son of God, the Beloved' must accept a Messianic career." (3)

The Messianic career toward which Jesus's mind turned found room for itself in the title "Son of Man". (4) The acceptance of this role marked an enlargement of his consciousness. "It meant recognition of the

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1. Bosworth, The Life and Teachings of Jesus, p. 68, 123.
2. Ibid., p. 89.
3. Ibid., p. 227.
4. Ibid., p. 227.

fact that he would be the Judge of men, as well as the Leader under God of a World Empire." (1) How could this be, since the "Son of Man" had no career on earth before the Judgment Day? Bosworth believes that the most probable answer is "that Jesus himself by a logical process reached the conclusion that the spirit of the Son of Man had taken possession of him." (2)

This new consciousness of being the Messianic Son of Man which Jesus entertained was very unlike that commonly held by the people. (3) Jesus felt that it was linked with suffering, which should be required for the inauguration of the Kingdom of God. (4) He is certain that Jesus "clearly anticipated death and a speedy reappearance in full Messianic power, perhaps at the general resurrection." (5)

21. George A. Barton

Barton states in his book, entitled, Jesus of Nazareth (1926), that the baptism of Jesus "marked the beginning of his realization that he was the Messiah." (6). The truth flashed upon him all in a moment. It came with such intense vividness that it seemed to be proclaimed

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1. Bosworth, loc. cit., p. 228.
2. Ibid., p. 229.
3. Ibid., p. 233.
4. Ibid., p. 241, 256.
5. Ibid., p. 331.
6. Barton, Jesus of Nazareth, p. 114.

by a voice from heaven. (1) At the end of the temptations, Jesus was convinced that Wwhatever the reality of the extravagant apocalyptic language applied to the Messiah might mean, it was fulfilled in him." (2)

These convictions lay for months locked within the breast of Jesus. He disclosed to his disciples the fact that he was the expected Messiah at Caesarea Philippi. (3) Although Jesus used the term Messiah to describe himself, he tried to impress upon the disciples that the ordinary ideas of the Messiah's work were wrong.(4)

Jesus told his disciples that when they should go up to Jerusalem for the Passover, "the chief priests would reject him, and would accomplish his death. That, however, would not end his work or his influence, for he would, though crucified, continue to live." (5).

The entry into Jerusalem was Jesus's symbolic sign of his Messianic claim. (6) Jesus wished to convey by this symbolic act, that he had <u>not</u> come to be a conquering warrior or political king, but a "lowly Servant and Prince of Peace. " (7) Jesus found his own nature corresponded in some true sense with the expectation of a supernatural Messiah, "although far more spiritual

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1. Barton, <u>Jesus of Nazareth</u>, p. 115.
2. Ibid., p. 125.
3. Ibid., p. 125; cf., p. 288.
4. Ibid., p. 393.
5. Ibid., p. 289.
6. Ibid., p. 316.
7. Ibid., p. 318.

and sublime." (1)

22. Rudolf Bultmann

Bultmann takes a position very similar to that taken by Wrede and Wellhausen. He states in his article, "The New Approach to the Synoptic Problem," Journal of Religion, VI, July 1926, that "the outline of the Gospels does not enable us to know either the outer course of the life of Jesus or his inner development. We must frankly confess that the character of Jesus as a human personality cannot be recovered by us. We can neither write a 'life of Jesus' nor present an accurate picture of his personality." (1) He maintains in his book, entitled, Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition (1921), that the outline of the life of Jesus is "an editorial creation." (2) He takes the same position in his later book, entitled, Jesus (1927). (3)

He is confident that Jesus did not regard himself as the Messiah. (4) In his Jesus (1927), Bultmann writes, "Personally I am of the openion that Jesus did not regard himself as the Messiah." (5) In his earlier

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1. Journal of Religion, VI, July 1926, p. 359.
2. Quoted from Journal of Religion, VI, July 1926, p. 343.
3. Jesus, p. 12, 15; quoted from Bundy, Our Recovery of Jesus, p. 101-102.
4. Journal of Religion, VI, July 1926, p. 359.
5. Jesus, p. 12; quoted from Bundy, Our Recovery of Jesus, p. 218 (footnote).

book, Die Geschichte der synoptischen Tradition, he took this same position. (1)

23. J. Warschauer

Warschauer makes a critical and historical study of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus in his work, The Historical Life of Christ (1927).

Was the hour of the baptism the birth-hour of his Messianic consciousness? Did he rise from the Jordan waters knowing himself to be the Messiah? Warschauer finds it impossible to answer in the affirmative. He declares that "it seems psychologically impossible that one who had lived the life of an obscure Galilean artisan, and who but a week previously had executed humble commissions in his native province, should have there and then identified Himself with that dazzling and glorious figure, the expectation of all the nation, foretold by so many of His nation's seers." (2)

He is convinced that the Messianic consciousness of Jesus was a growth. He holds that his Messianic consciousness, "so far from being full-grown at the outset of His ministry, was a gradual development, and reached completeness only during the closing phase

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1. Quoted from Montefiore, The Synoptic Gospels, I, p. 182.
2. Warschauer, The Historical Life of Christ, p. 48.

of His earthly career." (1) The reason why he veiled the secret of His Messiahship becomes clear, when we realize that "for the large part of his activity, he had no Messianic secret to veil." (2)

Warschauer holds that this development reached its climax at the Caesarean juncture. At that time "He took the final step, and identified Himself explicitly with the Son of Man, not as claiming to be the Messiah already, but believing that after He had suffered death as a ransom for many, He would return in the role of God's anointed." Although he was persuaded that the Kingdom was to be realized through his voluntary death, he was equally certain that there would follow his exaltation and return in glory. (3)

Jesus preached the coming of the Son of Man with intense conviction for a greater part of his ministry without realizing that he was himself the One whom he preached. When he had fully solved the secret of his own personality, "He took over and applied to Himself the messianic title which the similitudes of Enoch had made more or less current in the Palestine of the first century, but He did so only when He had transformed its contents by adding to it the discovery which stamps

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1. Warschauer, loc. cit., p. 102.
2. Ibid., p. 102.
3. Ibid., p. 103.

Him as the sublimist religious Genius of all time -- the discovery which He expressed in the words, 'The Christ must suffer.'" (1)

24. C; G. Montefiore

Montefiore, a Jew by nationality and in sympathies, has made a frank and appreciative study of the mind of Jesus in his two volume commentary, The Synoptic Gospels (1927)

He claims that if Jesus held that he was the Messiah, it was a gradual development throughout his ministry. "Jesus, though he may have felt at the Baptism some call to be a Teacher and Prophet, did not believe himself to be the Messiah or Son of Man till a later period in his ministry. His "'Messianic Consciousness' was the product of his ministry: he did not start with it." (2)

Montefiore suggests that there is a possibility that Jesus did not suppose himself to be the Messiah. (3) But the general attitude of the two volumes is that Jesus did claim to be the Messiah during a part of his ministry.

In what sense did Jesus believe himself (if indeed he did so believe at all) to be the Messiah? The Messiah

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1. Warschauer, loc. cit., p. 104.
2. Montefiore, The Synoptic Gospels, Vol. I, p. 19; cf. Vol. I, p. cxxix-cxxx, 28, 74, 88, 184.
3. Ibid., I:15; cf. I:186.

whom he claimed to be, or to become, was not, in the opinion of the Rabbis, the Messiah whom older prophecy had described and foretold. (1) Jesus had no better name to use than "Messiah," "but it was a mere shell, a mere name, for something totally different from the ordinary Jewish conception." (2) Jesus believed that he was to take a leading part in that greater drama, the coming of the Kingdom. "God was going to make an end of the older order; there was no need for man to fight; the Roman dominion would presumably fall to pieces of itself, or through divine agency, when the new order and divine Kingdom were established. In this sense, then, the Messiah to Jesus was not a 'political' personage; not a warrior; not an 'earthly' prince; not a 'merely Jewish' monarch. In this sense he was to Jesus probably more like the Messiah of apocalyptic dreamers." (3)

He suggests that the stress laid upon the Messiah's work of service, even of lowly service, was perhaps the special development made by Jesus to the conception of the Messiah. This view would fit in with the supposition that Jesus identified himself with the mysterious Man (Daniel vii. 13) who was sent by God at the great crisis to superintend the final

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1. Montefiore, The Synoptic Gospels, Vol. I, p. cxxxi.
2. Ibid., I:15.
3. Ibid., I:17; cf. I:22, 220.

consummation. (1)

It is the opinion of the author that Jesus, in some sense or other, claimed to be the Messiah, and that "in the later months of his ministry, he may have come to believe not only that God had invested him with a lofty office (though it was the greatness of service), but also that if in the discharge of that office he must encounter death, he would be transformed, or raised, after death, into the veritable Son of Man of the apocalyptic seer." (2) However, he maintains that the "Suffering Servant" interpretation of Messiah involves "a dangerously large insight into the inner consciousness of Jesus." (3) He holds that Jesus's claim to be the Suffering Servant is doubtful. (4)

25. Shirley Jackson Case

Professor S. J. Case is highly skeptical of Jesus's Messianic consciousness and locates its origin in the resurrection faith of the earliest Christians. This position is set forth in his book, Jesus: A New Biography. (1927).

Jesus, throughout his entire public ministry, was

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1. Montefiore, Loc. cit., p. 17, Vol. I; cf. I:22, 220
2. Ibid., I:74-75.
3. Ibid., II:20.
4. Ibid., II:167; cf. I:liii.

an itinerant prophet, At the hour of his baptism, Jesus saw the need of his people to be summoned to a life in more perfect accord with the will of God, and so "without reserve Jesus gave himself to the pursuit of this new-found prophetic task." (1) He is certain that if Jesus would have been called upon for self-classification in the interests of indicating the type of task to which he had set himself, undoubtedly the word "prophet" would have been the first to spring to his lips. (2) Case maintains that "it is altogether improbable that Jesus had ever called himself the 'Son of Man.'" (3)

He locates the origin of Jesus's Messianic consciousness in the resurrection faith of the earliest Christians. They introduced into the earlier Jewish eschatological hope, Jesus, their own beloved teacher, as the apocalyptic Messiah. (4) In his work entitled, The Historicity of Jesus (1912), Case states that "the chief evidences that Jesus was the coming Messiah were not found at first in history but in the present experiences of the Christians themselves." (5) He holds that the new Christian Messianic faith was born "out of this confused mass of heritage, memories, and emotions." (6) The events that gave rise to this belief

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1. Case, Jesus: A New Biography, p. 264.
2. Ibid., p. 247.
3. Ibid., p. 372.
4. Ibid., p. 372.
5. Case, The Historicity of Jesus, p. 144.
6. Case, Jesus: A New Biography, p. 375.

were the crucifixion, resurrection, reappearance, and heavenly exaltation. (1) They came to believe that "Jesus was the New Messianic deliverer who would presently appear to inaugurate the New Age." (2)

They assumed that Jesus had held their opinions, but for some mysterious reason must have temporarily veiled his thoughts from them. It was now their duty to draw aside the veil. "Before many years had passed they were able, with complete satisfaction, to recall supposed words of his from which it seemed absolutely certain that he had designated himself 'Messiah' and had predicted his future descent from heaven as the apocalyptic Son of Man." (3)

Jesus, like John, announced that the Kingdom of God was at hand. It was his mission to get the Jewish people to make haste in accomplishing their repentance. Jesus was certain that the establishment of the Kingdom would not be accomplished through the rehabilitation of the Davidic prince to the royal throne in Jerusalem. He used, in his preaching, the imagery of Jewish apocalyptic thinking. (4) Case claims that Jesus "was an eschatologist, not a messianist." (5)

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1. Case, Jesus: A New Biography, p. 374-375.
2. Ibid., p. 373.
3. Ibid., p. 374.
4. Ibid., p. 427.
5. Ibid., p. 428.

26. Walter E. Bundy

Walter E. Bundy, in his book, entitled, Our Recovery of Jesus (1929), states that "we shall have to admit that the great body of the messianic elements in the Gospels are of Christian origin and that we can say very little that is definite regarding the messianic issue in Jesus's own mind." (1) He is quite certain that nowhere in the three Gospels is it perfectly clear that Jesus regarded himself as the Messiah. (2) He makes the following statement, "I am also equally convinced for myself that.....Jesus rejected the Messiahship outright - a rejection that preserved the health of his mind and the integrity of his relation to his God." (3)

In reading the books of Bundy one comes to sense an undertone running through them that there is a possibility, though it is not likely, that Jesus did come to think of himself as the Messiah or that he was to become the Messiah. (4) Although the Gospel writers do present Jesus as thinking of himself as the Messiah, Jesus "practiced an unbroken reserve and reticence." (5)

In the Gospel narratives, Jesus acts and speaks

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1. Bundy, Our Recovery of Jesus, p. 219.
2. Ibid., p. 247.
3. Ibid., p. 256; cf. Bundy, The Psychic Health of Jesus, p. 199.
4. Ibid., p. 247, 248, 251; cf. Bundy, The Psychic Health of Jesus, p. 221-223.
5. Ibid., p. 247.

as the called preacher or prophet of the Kingdom of God. (1) It is the attitude of Bundy that Jesus thought of himself as one like a prophet or teacher of religion. Whatever may be said, "Jesus's self-estimate never comes clearly to view. It remains, as he chose that it should, his own private matter." (2) This issue "was a purely personal problem of his innermost life which he fought out in that sanctum sanctorum where man stands alone in the presence of his Maker." (3)

He maintains that "in every feature of the picture that has come down to us, Jesus's consciousness -- in its character and in its content, in its control and in its confession -- is fundamentally, once and for all, religious.....

".....The Messianic consciousness, if Jesus possessed such, he always subordinated to that deeper element in his nature, the religious consciousness." (4) The self-consciousness of Jesus, according to Bundy, was not messianic, but strictly religious, which he calls "a religious consciousness." (5)

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1. Bundy, Our Recovery of Jesus, p. 246.
2. Ibid., p. 255.
3. Ibid., p. 256.
4. Ibid., p. 251; cf. Bundy, The Psychic Health of Jesus, p. 221-223.
5. Ibid., p. 267; cf. p. 253, 255.

27. Fred Merrifield

In the Rediscovery of Jesus (1929), Fred Merrifield states that "Jesus sternly rejected the Christ-title as savoring of political self-seeking, and that only the later church ever dreamed of confusing him with the Son of Man whom both he and John expected to come from glory for the redemption of the Jewish nation." (1)

He maintains that the young carpenter threw himself into the new and dangerous mission as a prophet. (2) He is certain that both Jesus and John looked for the Prince of Glory, a Son of Man (as numerous Jewish apocalypses of the time described Him), who should descend from the very presence of God to rule the world. (3) To say that Jesus looked upon Himself as that heavenly Messiah "is not only thoroughly anachronistic and inexcusably confusing, but quite remote from the facts as clearly established in our earliest records." (4) The idea that Jesus believed himself the Messiah, or was so regarded by his contemporaries during his lifetime, is of "late origin and unreliable." (5)

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1. Merrifield, The Rediscovery of Jesus, p. 87.
2. Ibid., p. 30, 36-37.
3. Ibid., p. 35.
4. Ibid., p. 151.
5. Ibid., p. 58.

28. George Holley Gilbert

Gilbert maintains in his work, The Student's Life of Jesus (Third Edition, 1929), that the fact that Jesus believed himself to be the Messiah is indisputable.

The author states that the baptism was the birth-hour of Jesus's Messianic consciousness. (1) It was at the wedding in Cana that first he manifested his Messianic "glory." (2) He did not make an explicit public claim to be the Messiah until the last week of his ministry. (3) It took place before the Sanhedrin. (4)

Jesus utterly refused to conform to the popular Messianic role. (5) He accepted a spiritual conception of the Messianic office. (6) The Messianic consciousness of Jesus had "some new and strange features." (7) He believed that he would suffer, be rejected and be put to death. (8) "He saw clearly that He was to be put to death, and that His cause would apparently fail, but He knew that in His inmost soul that He should yet overcome, because He knew that He was the Messiah." (9) Jesus believed his death to be the hour of his glori-

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1. Gilbert, The Student's Life of Jesus, p. 54.
2. Ibid., p. 85.
3. Ibid., p. 100.
4. Ibid., p. 288.
5. Ibid., p. 207, 141.
6. Ibid., p. 101.
7. Ibid., p. 188.
8. Ibid., p. 188.
9. Ibid., p. 191.

fication. (1) He pictured to the Sanhedrin his future position on the clouds as Supreme Judge. This was an echo of the apocalyptic Son of Man who was to appear upon the clouds of heaven. (2)

29. Burton Scott Easton

In B. S. Easton's book, Christ in the Gospels (1930), the author is convinced that Jesus came forth from the water after his baptism unshakably conscious that he himself was the Messiah. (3) The disciples themselves had realized and accepted his Messiahship before Peter's confession. (4)

Jesus's conception of his Messiahship reached its fullest development when he faced probably death at Jerusalem. He was certain that he should suffer and be put to death. Nevertheless, Jesus was confident that death would not interfere with his personal completion of his appointed task, for otherwise he could be no Messiah at all. Jesus felt that "if his success in this world was still incomplete, he must look for his final victory beyond this world. And since death would exalt him out of this world into Heaven, the final

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1. Gilbert, The Student's Life of Jesus, p. 245, 276.
2. Ibid., p. 288.
3. Easton, Christ in the Gospels, p. 179.
4. Ibid., p. 191.

Messianic achievement would be from heaven. So from this point onward 'Son of Man' appears as a self-designation of Jesus." (1) Jesus, facing his enemies and knowing that the end was at hand, actually conceived of himself as the celestial Messiah, "the Man from heaven," "the Son of Man." "In no other way," says Easton, "can we gain a consistent meaning from the chain of evidence inseparably united with the certain historical fact that Jesus's cross bore the inscription, 'The King of the Jews.'" (2)

30. Walter Russell Bowie

Bowie, in his book, entitled, The Master: A Life of Jesus Christ (1930), maintains that Jesus beheld a new meaning for the Messiah, whom he believed himself to be. "Jesus wore the livery of no stereotyped ideas. The threads of old hopes and dreams which he took up, he wove anew into the seamless garment of his own creative thought." (3)

At the Baptism, Jesus felt an awareness of an utter union with his Father which made him the Son supremely appointed to be the leader and saviour of his brethren. Bowie is uncertain whether or not Jesus

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1. Easton, Christ in the Gospels, p. 192; cf., p. 196.
2. Ibid., p. 174.
3. Bowie, The Master: A Life of Jesus Christ, p. 235.

was conscious of his Messiahship at this time, but he does believe that since Jesus had seen a new conception of the Messiah, "and because it was he who had seen it, inescapably he must come to recognize that it was he also who must fulfill it." Something wholly new did not occur here, but rather something which he had been questioning came to its climax. (1)

Although "there is no light by which the inner paths of Jesus's consciousness can be surely followed," (2) it is possible to learn that the new meaning placed by Jesus upon his Messiahship was that of suffering. (3) At Caesarea Philippi, Jesus told his disciples that he was going to Jerusalem, "To die." He told them that he would be rejected by the Elders and the chief priests and would be put to death. (4) "More and more," says Bowie, "the great conception of a suffering Messiahship took hold upon his thought." (5) Yet, his disciples (6), the people (7), and the scribes (8) failed to understand his kind of Messiahship. Jesus, seeing in John the fulfilment of the prophecy of Elijah's coming, realized that a greater than John must go the way of death. (9)

Jesus used the apocalyptic forms with which his

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1. Bowie, The Master: A Life of Jesus Christ, p. 79.
2. Ibid., p. 79.
3. Ibid., p. 89.
4. Ibid., p. 202.
5. Ibid., p. 206.
6. Ibid., p. 202-205.
7. Ibid., p. 233.
8. Ibid., p. 251.
9. Ibid., p. 208.

people were familiar. (1) He did use the term, "Son of Man." It may have meant man only, or the apocalyptic "Son of Man" which the prophet Daniel (vii. 13) dreamed. (2) Jesus used it, but through this "veiled title, there shone the face of a new conception ..... a Messiah of immediate salvation; a Messiah of mercy, by God's love anointed on earth to cleanse men from their sins and set them free." (3) Although Jesus did use the apocalyptic language to express the conviction of his coming power and glory, the people failed to grasp its deeper spiritual meaning. (4)

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1. Bowie, The Master: A Life of Jesus Christ, p. 160, 163-4.
2. Ibid., p. 205, 115.
3. Ibid., p. 115.
4. Ibid., p. 240.

VI. The Summary

It has been the purpose of this thesis to discover the trend of the Jesus-Messiah controversy in modern criticism, which extends from 1901 to 1930. A chronological survey has been made of the field of scholarship with reference to two questions, namely, Did the historic Jesus believe himself to be the Messiah? If so, in what sense did he accept the Messianic role for himself? In reviewing the positions of the scholars from Oscar Holtzmann, William Wrede and Albert Schweitzer to Burton Scott Easton and Walter Russell Bowie, it has been discovered that critical opposition is still alive. The skepticism of Wrede and the eschatological zeal of Schweitzer have not died out.

This study has revealed the fact, that the historicity of Jesus is generally conceded by all New Testament scholars. Although he is accepted as an historical personage, he is not interpreted by all men alike. The conclusions reached are, undoubtedly, the expressions of the writer's own experience of the historical Jesus.

The critics have studied the Gospel narratives, but, for the most part, they have gone away from the sources with different conclusions. It appears that Jesus is still "The Man Nobody Knows" in a deeper sense that that which the book of that name suggests. Some

of them think that Jesus did not believe himself to be the Messiah, while others are certain that he did. Among those who think that he did believe himself to be the Messiah, there is a wide difference of opinion. It becomes quite impossible to make a rigid classification of the positions held by the critics. There are as many different positions as there are scholars. A classification must necessarily be general in its nature.

The advent of the books of Wrede, Oscar Holtzmann and Schweitzer (in the year 1901) marks the beginning of "The Jesus-Messiah Controversy in Modern Criticism." Wrede represents thorough-going skepticism; Oscar Holtzmann represents the liberal position; Schweitzer represents thorough-going eschatology. The positions of these scholars furnish the general outline for our classification of the scholarship during the past thirty years.

Wrede (1901), representing thorough-going skepticism, dared to eliminate altogether the Messianic element from the life of the historic Jesus. This position required a critical courage which few scholars have cared to take, because of its far reaching consequences. He placed the origin of the belief in Jesus's Messianic consciousness in the resurrection

faith of the earliest Christians. This position was not only attacked from the opposite side of the controversy, but it gained not a few adherents. Wellhausen (1905) followed Wrede. However, Wellhausen was not so thorough-going as Wrede, because he allowed for the possibility that Jesus professed to be the Messiah before the High Priest, although it played little or no part in his life or work.

Wrede and Wellhausen were followed by Schmidt (1905), Garrod (1906), Bultmann (1921, 1926, 1927), Case (1927), and Merrifield (1929). These men maintain that Jesus thought himself to be, not the Messiah, but a prophet. Jesus was an itinerant prophet, who was announcing the coming of the Kingdom of God. It was his mission to get the Jewish people to make haste in accomplishing their repentance. It is to be noted that these New Testament critics, as a group, allow an apocalyptic element in the preaching of Jesus, but they maintain that he never identified himself as the Messiah.

There are other scholars, Bacon (1909, 1927), Montefiore (1927), and Bundy (1929), who question Jesus's Messianic consciousness seriously. They are unwilling to follow Wrede and his disciples in their arbitrary denial of the Messianic consciousness of Jesus. They allow the possibility that Jesus did think of himself as the Messiah.

Bacon (1909, 1927), maintains that if Jesus used the title of Messiah, it was only in a purely ethico-religious sense, in order to preserve that deepest and most vital element of the Messianic hope --- the Sonship of God. According to Bundy (1929), the Messianic consciousness, if Jesus possessed such, was subordinated to that deeper element in his nature --- the religious consciousness. Montefiore, allowing a possibility for the gradual development of the Messianic consciousness in the mind of Jesus, holds that it was "a mere shell, a mere name" for something entirely different from the ordinary Jewish conception.

Oscar Holtzmann (1901), representing the liberal position at the beginning of the controversy, held that Jesus did believe himself to be the Messiah. However, there is a wide difference of opinion among those scholars, who have followed this liberal position, as to the nature of his Messianic consciousness. There are those scholars, following Oscar Holtzmann, who believe that the birth-hour of Jesus's Messianic consciousness was at the Baptism. They are Wernle (1903), Bousset (1906), Garvie (1907), Klausner (1925), Barton (1926), Gilbert (1929), and Easton (1930). Bowie (1930) allows that it is quite possible. David Smith (1905, 1926), departing from this view, holds that Jesus discovered the fact that he was the promised Messiah during the passover week at the age of

twelve. The Baptism was a distinct attestation, however, of his Messiahship, since the "Son of God" was a Jewish title for the Messiah.

Another group of scholars, consisting of Schmiedel, (1907), Harnack (1908) Scott (1911), Stokes (1916), Robertson (1917), Berguer (1923), Bosworth (1926) and Warschauer (1927), maintain that his Messianic consciousness was a development, ripening gradually during his public ministry. Montefiore (1927) states that if Jesus thought himself to be the Messiah it was a growth. These critics hold that his Messianic consciousness was brought to a climax at the Caesarea Philippi incident, with the exception of Robertson, who places it on the Mount of Transfiguration.

It is the general position of these scholars that the Messiahship remained a secret with Jesus. A secret locked within his own bosom; and not until late in his ministry was it revealed. However, these critics who regard the Messianic consciousness to be a development within the inner life of Jesus, say that for a large part of his ministry he had no messianic secret to veil.

Jesus reveals his Messiahship, according to the majority of these men, at the time of Peter's confession. Easton (1930) holds that the disciples themselves had realized and accepted his Messiahship before this time. Jesus did not make an explicit public claim to be the

Messiah until the last week of his ministry. This is generally accepted by all.

There are those scholars within the liberal camp, who believe that Jesus accepted the office of Messiah under compulsion. Wernle (1903) says that "he knew himself sent, nay, driven by God." Although forced to accepted the office, it was "as a mere matter of duty, as a burden, rather than an inspiration." Since it was inadequate for Jesus and lacked harmony with his ideas of the Messiah, he was forced to reinterpret and purify the currect Jewish conception. This position is held by Wernle (1903), Bousset (1906), Stokes (1916), Berguer(1923), Barton (1926), Montefiore (1927), and Gilbert (1929).

It is the general position of the liberals that Jesus saw the necessity of the element of suffering in the Messiahship which he accepted for himself. Wernle (1903), Scott (1911), Stokes (1916), Robertson (1917), and Bowie (1930), hold that Jesus believed himself to be the "Suffering Messiah" a Servant. Montefiore (1927) maintains that this interpretation of the Messiah is very doubtful. David Smith (1905), Garvie (1907) and Robertson (1917) stress the idea of "sacrifice" in Jesus's Messianic consciousness.

It has been discovered that all of the liberals, with the possible exception of Bacon (1909, 1927), stress the apocalyptic element in Jesus's Messianic consciousness.

In the thinking of Jesus, suffering and death become linked with this apocalyptic element. It was through grievous suffering and death that he was to attain this glory. Hart (1923) and Murry (1926) hold that although Jesus did not believe that he was the Messiah, he knew that through suffering and death he should become the apocalyptic "Son of Man." Klausner (1925) holds that Jesus believed that through suffering, but not death, he should be recognized as the apocalyptic Political-Messiah.

The third position taken among New Testament scholars is the eschatological. This group of critics is represented by Albert Schweitzer (1901), Johannes Weiss (1903) and George Tyrrell (1913), These men, being whole-hearted supporters of this position, hold that Jesus identified himself with the "eschatological messiah." They maintain that Jesus lived completely in the eschatological Messianic ideas, based upon the near approach of the supernatural kingdom of heaven. Jesus was convinced of the nearness of the final catastrophe, in which the supernatural eschatological course of history would break through and into the natural course. Jesus concealed his Messianic consciousness, believing that it would be supernaturally revealed to men. According to Schweitzer, it was revealed to the disciples of Jesus at the Transfiguration in a "state of ecstasy."

The sufferings of Jesus are given an important

place in eschatological theory. It was always associated with his Messianic consciousness, since he placed his Parousia at the end of the pre-Messianic tribulations in which he was to have his part. He believed that by his own death, he would hasten the issue.

It has been discovered that the trend of "The Jesus-Messiah Controversy in Modern Criticism" has been essentially the continuation of the general positions taken in the year 1901 by Wrede, Oscar Holtzmann and Schweitzer. While all of the scholars have gone to the same source material, some have gone away skeptics; others, liberals; and others, eschatologists.

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